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This conference report contains a summary of the proceedings and the text of two papers. The paper by Gertrude S. Goldberg, "Research Issues Evoked by the Moynihan Report," presents the critical response to that report and notes the issues raised by it. She discusses the alleged pathology of the Negro family, the relationship between family patterns and educational achievement, and the "case for national action." The address by James A. Jones, "Cultural Deprivation: Some Second Thoughts," describes some findings of a HARYOU study of the central Harlem community. The major focus of his paper was the motivation for education among poor families. A preliminary analysis (1967) of the HARYOU data shows that poor families in central Harlem and the middle class in general share similar values about education. (NH)

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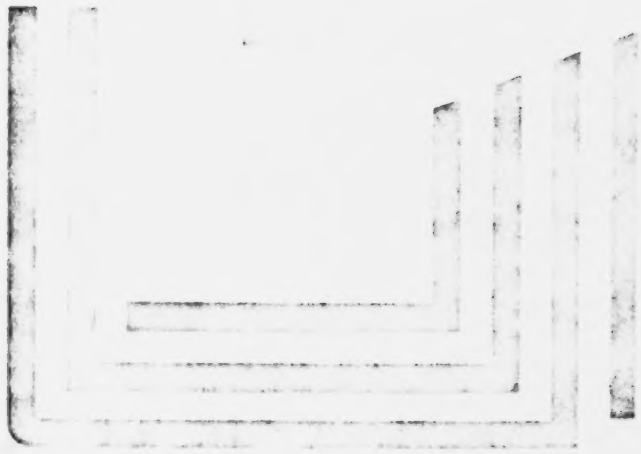

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CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SERVICES FOR THE EDUCATIONAL REHABILITATION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

June 15-16, 1967

Ferkauf Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences
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URBAN LEAGUE CONFERENCE SUMMARY

The hypothesis that family instability is causally related to educational failure is often taken for granted although it has by no means been proven. Indeed, the need to identify the family patterns of the poor and their relationship to educational achievement are the basic research issues raised by this conference.

One rationale for using the report of Moynihan and his associates, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action, as an initial focus of discussion was its relation to these basic questions. Much had been said about the Report's diagnosis of the Negro family -- that it exaggerated weaknesses and overlooked strengths; that it defined as pathological, behaviors which were different from those of most middle-class families; that it selected statistical references which emphasized rapid deterioration rather than other measurements which implied long-standing instability; that it attributed to Negro families behaviors found with greater frequency among all poor families than among the more affluent, regardless of race; and that it assumed one type of family functioning when there is actually a wide range of behavioral patterns among poor families. Vital to the contention that there is a "case for national action" to stabilize the Negro family is the assumption that a family structure akin to that of middle class families is both lacking and necessary before Negroes can be socially mobile. It was, of course, academic achievement, not only of Negroes but of all disadvantaged groups, that was the mobility factor of concern to the conference.

The question of the relationship of family variables to school performance actually hinges on the more basic issue: the behavioral patterns of low-income families, themselves. How different the family structures and values of the poor are from the higher income groups is important to this consideration, for if differences are not so great, other factors must account for the great disparity in the educational achievement of lower and higher-income groups.

It was the contention of many participants that knowledge of the lower-income family is limited. Dr. Oscar Lewis maintained that an important fault of the Moynihan report itself was its lack of data. If this is a justified criticism, then perhaps social scientists should be more guarded in recommending policy based on such meager evidence. In fact, some participants were quite

concerned about the dual role of social scientist as researcher and advisor on social policy, for the combination of talents is rare. It was maintained by some, however, that to separate research and action programs is to make an artificial dichtomy.

The issue of individual vs. institutional responsibility for family breakdown and educational failure was a recurrent theme of the conference. Dr. Hylan Lewis and his associates in the Washington Child Rearing Study placed particular stress on the factor of income deficits rather than either differential or deficient values and attitudes, although they were careful to emphasize the wide variety of such patterns among the poor. The absence of money is a family variable which may affect school performance as well as family composition and stability, they maintained. They noted the relationship of money to family structure, to the aborting of families before they are ever established, and to the breakdown of formerly intact homes under the pressure of poverty. One of the conference papers postulated that the poverty of broken families headed by Negro females, particularly, may be the cause of educational and other inadequate functioning rather than the family composition per se. It may be the loss of a father's income rather than the psychological disadvantages of his absence that is more pertinent to children's achievement. It is primarily this variable which distinguishes father absence (either as a result of divorce or protracted business trips) in the upper income groups from the comparable phenomenon in the slums.

Dr. Oscar Lewis took a different attitude toward income deficits, a point of view consistent with his culture of poverty concept. He stressed the different meanings that absence of money has, that to some families in the culture, more correctly subculture, of poverty, added income did not substantially alter behavior. Others, notably Chairman Gordon, raised the question of its effect over periods of time. Some Puerto Rican families from San Juan slums bettered themselves economically on the mainland but, according to Dr. Oscar Lewis, showed little immediate changes in values and behavior. However, such income mobility may, as some participants suggested, have important effects in the next generation.

Virtually all conferees agreed that the relationship between family patterns, themselves poorly understood, and academic achievement requires further definition. There was the question, first of all, of the relevance of family variables to intellectual preparation for school. What behaviors of poor families

can be specifically attributed to pre-school IQ scores and other measures of academic aptitude which are lower than those of middle-class children? Furthermore, what attributes or perhaps deficiencies of low-income families -- for example, insufficient intellectual stimulation or inadequate home teaching, can be shown to be causally related to poor school achievement once children are in school? What types of support both for school achievement and the actual work of the school do poor families give? On the one hand were questions like these which, as Kenneth Marshall put it, assumed certain de facto results of deprivation. In contrast, Manuel Romero and others tended to emphasize institutional rather than family dysfunctioning. Others, following an observation of Dr. Joan Gordon, pointed out that some family attitudes are either supportive or inconsistent with school achievement depending upon institutional practices. For example, a parent who viewed the school as "caretaker" would not necessarily be inhibiting a child's education if the school program were an excellent one and school staff were prepared to assume a directive and wholistic role. Still another question raised was what institutional supports or community resources could be utilized to counter both family and school dysfunction or the incompatability of their functioning.

The question of motivation for education on the part of poor families was a focus of the paper of Dr.Jones, who noted that most compensatory education programs assume that poor families poorly motivate their children to succeed in school. One aspect of this issue, the value which poor families place on education, was discussed. And it was the impression both of many conferees (a number of whom are directly offering educational and other community services to poor families) and the implications of the HARYOU survey findings reported by Dr. Jones that poor families understand the relevance of education to success in life and consequently value it highly. It is not necessary to establish that they have as high levels of aspirations for their children's education as do higher-income families but that they value education much more than the educational achievement of their children would indicate. It was Dr. Jones' preliminary report of HARYOU survey data, now in the process of analysis, that poor families in Central Harlem appear to have values very much like members of the middle class.

This apparent value paradox led to a discussion of several important research issues, in fact of the relevance of certain types of research to action

programs for the disadvantaged. First, the researcher's belief that something important had been demonstrated by showing that the poor have educational values akin to those of middle-class persons was questioned. Some of the action personnel felt it unthinkable that the poor had not got the message conveyed not only by their own limited occupational mobility but by all the mass media -- namely that educational attainment is the root of general social mobility. It was observed, however, that although action personnel, like many of those present from the Urban League staff, are in touch with the poor and do not doubt their recognition of education's value, many compensatory programs are based on this assumed lack of motivation. Such research offers quantitative support to the impressions of action personnel which are always based upon a small, not necessarily representative, sample. Furthermore, researchers were eager to point out that the mere investigation of attitudes toward education does not suggest that educational motivation among the poor was assumed by the investigators to be lacking. In the case of the HARYOU research, it was shown by Dr. Jones that many family patterns, assumed to have certain outcomes in the social science literature, were observed among Central Harlem families but did not appear to have the hypothesized outcomes. Thus, having addressed themselves to some of these assumptions, they were led to raise questions about their validity. The testing of a hypothesis does not imply that one wants to support it as some action personnel seemed to suggest, nor that data will necessarily prove or refute it.

A second important response to the value paradox was to question the helpfulness of survey-type data. And it was conceded by the sociologists present that such efforts do not identify processes and interactions but rather give some sense of where the problem lies, the incidence of certain behaviors, and the size population that is the target of certain mass efforts. Thus the survey may place in proper perspective the sub-culture of poverty hypothesis by showing that while it may be an appropriate description of family patterns of some of the poor it is not the way of life of most poor families. A mass program would therefore be amiss to predicate programs on such behaviors, but a service for multi-problem families might well consider it.

Rather than to assert that surveys merely report the obvious, others questioned whether responses described actual behavior. Oscar Lewis and others distinguished between what persons tell you they value and what they value enough

to sacrifice for. It is one thing to say that education is important and another to commit scarce resources to children's books, school clothing, etc. On the other hand, it is very much easier to do such things if one has abundant resources. Kenneth Marshall distinguished between means or process values and terminal or end values. One might aspire toward a high level of education, a terminal goal, but what of the immediate emphasis on homework, a process value. Some conferees suggested that respondents gave expected answers, those which were akin to attitudes prevailing in upper-status groups and to which they recognized their interviewers adhered. Others felt such a recognition, if not tantamount to desirable behavioral outcomes was a resource upon which programs could build, but the usual course is to assume the opposite. In any case, further study is required of the hierarchy of values or of such priorities among the poor.

Although many conferees acknowledged that the survey answers one type of question, the anthropological method of the in-depth case study was thought by some to contribute toward a more balanced understanding. In this regard, the need for careful longitudinal studies of families and particularly of the poorly understood phenomenon of social mobility was stressed. Furthermore, the emphasis of Moynihan and others on the weaknesses of the poor led some conferees to stress the need for careful study of the winners, of those who succeed in bettering their status although they appear to match the demographic characteristics of others who fail. Although there are several such studies of educational achievement of slum youth in process, this was thought to be a pregnant source of further research. On the other hand, it was noted that such studies might not address themselves to the question of what will contribute to the mobility of the majority rather than of the exceptional few.

In addition to the methodological concerns which the value problem evoked conferees asked what are the intervening variables between seemingly middle-class attitudes toward education and the academic failure of many slum youth. On this issue there appeared to be a lack of consensus among the participants, much as there is in the world outside the conference.

Some felt the school, as it were, is the intervening variable. It was the contention of more than a few that family behavior was much less important to school success than were institutional factors such as teacher attitudes and skills, institutional rewards for effective teaching of ghetto youth, and

the possibility of parents' participation in educational decision making. To paraphrase Mr. Manuel Romero, why concentrate on the sickness of the family rather than on a sick institution.

Several of those participants who stressed school rather than family variables felt that teacher attitudes were an important factor in the educational failure of many youth. Dr. Woock, who pointed out how little in general is understood of the process of teaching, felt there should be an attempt to identify teacher attitudes toward disadvantaged youth and how they were institutionally reinforced. What in teacher education was conducive to the formation of attitudes assumed to be pejorative and what in the school system permitted values inimical to the education of children to persist or to develop. On the other hand, some, including the Chairman, felt that attitudes were not necessarily important to teaching success or were of low priority. It was maintained that youngsters could be taught by persons who had negative attitudes toward them; in fact, the behaviorist would lean toward modifying teaching practice, which in turn might modify one's attitude toward the youth if his achievement contradicted previously held assumptions about his educability. In any case, teacher attitudes were not paramount issues according to this view. It was, however, pointed out that a pervasive belief that slum youth cannot learn tends to instigate a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure. A basic belief in educability might, it was hypothesized, be a sine qua non for effective teaching, even for the behaviorist.

Quite expectedly, the finding of the Coleman report which suggested that school-related variables like curricula and facilities were not strongly related to academic performance was cited in the discussion of institutional factors. Such data have been taken by some to imply that the onus for failure is on the family, that middle-class children learn because of their families' intellectual stimulus and support for school achievement, and most slum youngsters fail because their families fail them in these respects. However, it was noted, particularly by the Chairman, that the Coleman research measured school variables rather unsubtly. For example, the range between small and large class size may have been too close to permit significant differences in educational outcomes. Once again, the survey approach was questioned, for it failed here too to get at the process of education, at the quality of interactions in a classroom,

which may be poorly delineated, but nonetheless the crux of meaningful teaching. The need for participant observation of the teaching process had already been stressed. Dr. Oscar Lewis felt the need to develop three-to-five year studies of the interaction between family patterns and specific action interventions. Such research would shed light on the basic issue of the relevance of family behaviors to achievement and would serve to evaluate various action efforts.

Another school-related variable, that of parental participation in the making of school policy was discussed in its several aspects. While middle-class parents do not always control school policy, particularly big-city middle-class persons, it is probably less vital for them to assert themselves in an institution more attuned to them than to the poor. It would be more important for Harlem parents to have power in the educational system, and in view of the finding of the Coleman report that a sense of powerlessness among minority groups is associated with academic under-achievement, the power to affect school policy may be important in the ghetto. One research issue raised by this subject is the kind of role which parents would need in order to influence the school performance of their children. There is a need to discern whether power is important because it will actually influence teaching practice through increasing the accountability of school staff, because it will affect the self-image of parents and children, that is their sense of control over their lives, or because parents will give more wholehearted support to an institution in which they have an important stake. Some disagreement among participants over just how much power, indeed whether real decision making potential as opposed to the illusion of it was necessary stemmed partly from a failure to make the above kind of distinctions. In any case, there has been little experimentation with varying types of expansions of power of the poor in the educational arena and even fewer research efforts to carefully identify its effects.

RESEARCH ISSUES EVOKED BY THE MOYNIHAN REPORT

Gertrude S. Goldberg, M.S.
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The Moynihan Report has become so frequently identified with the name of its principal author that one sometimes forgets its official title: The Negro Family: The Case for National Action.[1] Yet, it seems important to recall that the authors of the Report contended that what they identified as the widespread breakdown and pathology of "the" Negro family was a matter of national policy. They were not primarily concerned with the quality of family life of what they believed to be the majority of Negroes. Rather, they focused on the family because they felt its weakness is responsible for the failure of most Negroes to achieve "the good life."

The authors of the Report were quite careful to eschew a policy of national officiousness, for they stated that the character of the Negro family would only be of concern to the Federal government until Negro Americans as a group were no longer a severely damaged minority. Mental health or family stability are not in this case viewed as per se a matter of national policy. The family is the focus because "the weakness of the family structure...(is)...the principal source of most of the aberrant, inadequate, or anti-social behavior that did not establish but now serves to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation."

Furthermore, the authors maintained that despite the fact that the roots of instability were in injustice--some feel they stressed past more than present deprivations--the family had become so damaged as a result, that it must be revitalized before its members could take advantage of changed social circumstances. Thus, family stability was not only seen as the immediate source of present problems in the Negro community, but as the target of any program to help the Negro community--"In a word, a national effort towards the problems of Negro Americans must be directed towards the question of family structure."

Responses to the Report have tended to deal more fully and frequently with its diagnosis of the Negro family than with its "case for national action." Neither the relevance of family stability to various achievement

variables nor the strategies for attaining stability, which the Report did not specify, but which many inferred, has been so carefully debated.

Such a response is understandable for several reasons. First, however scant our knowledge of lower-class, as opposed to working-class, families, is, it is probably greater than our knowledge of these other issues. Secondly, if the family patterns of most poor Negroes are different from those portrayed in the Report, or if they have different meanings than those implied by Moynihan et al, or, if they are far less widespread than these authors claimed, then there is a far more limited case for the proposed national action, if one at all. Finally, many were quite concerned lest the portrait of what we considered to be a minority of the Negro community serve to exacerbate negative stereotypes of all Negroes.

HOW PATHOLOGICAL IS "THE" NEGRO FAMILY?

Since the debate over the Report's discussion of the Negro family still rages and family life research has not provided us with definitive answers to some of these questions, it seems important to review briefly the major issues which this aspect of the Report has evoked and which require more careful formulation and study.

The meaning of the concept of family stability was one of the issues raised by the Report's description of the Negro family. The Report itself made no effort to define stability. Indeed, it is a frequently used but infrequently defined concept. William Ryan was one of the critics who rated the authors' "careless tying together of such vague concepts as 'family stability' with a few specific measures of family composition."[2]

The Report simply implied that illegitimacy is unstable and its converse, legitimacy, is stable, as are intact homes or male-headed households. Purely quantitative measures of these working definitions of stability were observed with little attention to the quality of, for example, a father's presence in the room, or to the effects of an intact home which is the perpetual battleground of marital conflict. The authors

seem to define as stable what is the modal behavior for whites--and Negroes, for that matter. Indeed, it is assumed that family patterns different from the majority of all American families are pathologically deviant. There is, further, little awareness of the meaning of such behaviors to those who exhibit them.

Herbert Gans has, for example, observed that we do not know enough about lower-class family structure to conclude that it is as pathological as the Report implies-- ...it may well be that instability, illegitimacy and matriarchy are the most positive adaptations possible to the economic conditions which Negroes must endure, and will only change with removal of these conditions.[3]

The research of Dr. Hylan Lewis and his associates in Washington, D.C., which did not find this "instability" preponderant even among poor families, also suggests the importance of viewing behaviors from the vantage point of the families themselves. That is, they found not just that behavior is understandable, ultimately, but in the short run too. Most low-income families do not have very different standards from higher income families as a result of long-standing deprivations. Furthermore, the stringency of present choices leads them to behave in ways that often do not appear self-defeating to the middle-class observor who puts himself in their position. Indeed, they are the choices which many of us would make were we faced with comparable conditions.[4]

This issue thus evokes questions about the existence of a culture of poverty in the sense of a comprehensive life view of the poor. Some maintain that the values are not very different from those of middle-class persons but that life chances or social opportunities necessitate different behaviors. There is also what may be termed the intermediate position of a "value stretch," which has been proposed by Hyman Rodman.[5]

Critics who accept the authors' definitions of instability and those who challenge it assert that Moynihan and his associates overestimate the incidence among Negroes of the behaviors defined as unstable. Just how widespread are these behaviors among Negroes in Northern cities, Southern cities, recent migrants vs. long-term residents in urban areas, or among rural

Southerners and migrant workers? Some recent work by Charles Killingsworth emphasizes the need to view unemployment very carefully and in terms of specific metropolitan areas. In doing so Killingsworth drew conclusions somewhat different from those suggested by national data on Negro unemployment.[6]

Luther Jackson asked rather pointedly, which Negro family is the report characterizing?[7] What is clear from the research we do have is the considerable variety of types of functioning among lower-class families--a larger range than among middle-class persons, it seems. Even persons who share such statuses as being poor, Negro, and residents of the same slum, show marked differences in social functioning.

What evidence we have about lower-class families, including some reported in the Moynihan piece, suggests that instability is the way of life of the minority. "Nearly a quarter of urban Negro marriages are dissolved," the Report asserts; but, had someone wished to make different inferences from the same data, he might have written, "Over three-quarters of urban Negro marriages are intact."

About one-third of the families in the Washington study exhibit what Dr. Lewis has termed a "clinical syndrome."[8] This afternoon Dr. Jones will present some data from the HARYOU survey which may give some indication of how prevalent instability is in a Northern slum area. Certainly we need to have more research concerning the wide variety of behavior patterns among the poor, the answers to which will permit considerable refinement of strategies in relation to specific target groups.

One could accept the authors' view of instability and their estimate of its extent among Negroes, but disagree with their estimate of rapid deterioration. Elizabeth Herzog has observed that rates of illegitimate births per 1,000 women of childbearing age are a far more accurate measure of changes of behavior than the ratio of illegitimate to legitimate births;[9] the latter statistical reference was chosen by the authors. Because the ratio figures indicate more rapid recent rise than those by rate, which

show a relatively steady rise among Negroes over several decades, one wonders whether Moynihan and his associates deliberately chose their statistics to make the point of impending crisis.

Similarly, Herzog analyzed the rise in fatherless families or female-headed households among Negroes and found that the increase has been gradual with no net increment between 1960 and 1964.[10] Particularly because it affects the solutions to be developed, she concluded that "it is important to differentiate between sudden acceleration of family crisis and relatively sudden perception of a long-chronic situation...."[11]

The Report, partly because it was intended to stir action, emphasized weaknesses in the Negro community. In addition to its having exaggerated the prevalence of deviant behaviors, it seems to have ignored strengths in the community, as opposed to mere absence of pathology. Frank Riessman, Robert Coles, Erik Erikson, and more recently, Ralph Ellison, are among those who have written of strengths in the Negro family. Coles has alluded to the courage and fortitude of Negroes in the civil rights struggle, including many who are among the "down and out," and Riessman has emphasized patterns of self help.

In her study of poor Negro families in central Harlem, Joan Gordon found that 65 per cent of a sample of Harlem mothers, all of whom were poor and many, welfare recipients, showed moderate or high community integration--i.e. participated in forms of mutual aid such as help in time of illness or trouble, loaning money or clothes, and sharing information about how to raise children, where to shop, and neighborhood problems.[12] Hylan Lewis' studies in Washington, D.C. also suggest considerable strength among many poor families in that city.

An important issue raised by the issue of strengths among the severely deprived is the relationship between injustice and debilitation. At the American Academy conference on the Negro American, Everett Hughes offered one view of this relationship and its policy implications:

> I want to throw in a point on American ideology about social problems. We seem to have an idea that we have a better case for proving injustice if we can show that it makes people sick. There is a tendency to say injustice produces neurosis. Then if we find out it is not so, we think we are not so bad off. There is not necessarily any relationship between neurosis and injustice.[13]

Cognizance of strengths in the Negro family should not, on the other hand, be construed as complacence about the conditions the community endures. On the contrary, if circumstances rather than behaviors are stressed, recognition of resources tends to win respect and hence support for efforts to aid the Negro community rather than disdain for its deteriorated condition. And, in terms of the potential for change in the community, such a position is compatible with a basic tenet of community development--that, as Reissman has observed, people are often moved to solve their problems through an emphasis on their strengths, their positives, and their coping abilities.[14] If programs are to truly build on the resources of the disadvantaged, then an important goal of investigation is to specify in greater detail the coping abilities of various segments of that population.

The extent to which the Negro community and the Negro family should be given special attention among other disadvantaged groups--72 per cent of America's poor families are headed by whites and 38 per cent of the nation's poor children are nonwhite--was raised by the Report's basing a special case for national action on the Negro family. And, it should be remembered that the emphasis on the need for special attention, in turn, is partly derived from their handling of statistical data.

The authors have been criticized for attributing the behavior of Negro families to racial rather than socio-economic variables. Herzog has pointed out that family structure differs more among income levels than between Negro and white families, and the same is true of educational

achievement of the two groups of children.[15] A tendency to emphasize the past experience of slavery was also noted and attributed to the focus on racial variables.[16]

Hylan Lewis has observed that "since a much larger proportion of Negroes than whites is on the lowest income level (42 per cent as opposed to 12 per cent of whites living in poverty) what look like statistically significant differences between Negroes and whites may actually be differences between socio-economic levels."[17] There are, of course, aspects of Negroes' present circumstances which would account for some of the differences that remain when socio-economic factors are controlled--the fact that the same amounts of education and income do not produce equal results in terms of living standards for Negroes and whites. If research were to develop some more sensitive matching procedures for Negroes and whites, then the question of whether there is a special case for national action for Negroes, other than the greater debt they are owed as a group and their greater present deprivations, might be easier to answer. Deprivation itself and the purely strategic aspects of making a special case for the Negro might be the major bases for such a policy decision.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY PATTERNS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

I fear that the amount of material or the time that I will devote to the case-for-national-action implications of the Report will tend to perpetuate the tendency to deal primarily with its handling of the Negro family. It would seem that a primary function of this conference would be to discuss and to formulate research concerning the relevance of family structure to specific kinds of educational achievement, and what family behaviors, if any, should be the target of educational programs.

Ryan was one of the Report's early critics who at least attempted to deal with the issue of the relevance of family variables to school achievement, criminal offenses, etc. Chiefly, he pointed out that the

authors of the Report tended to confuse the phenomenon of correlation with that of causation. He reminded us of a fundamental fact about statistics; that because A and B occur together or are correlated does not mean that A caused B. Because boys from fatherless homes have poor school records does not mean that this family pattern is responsible for their educational failure.[18]

In the case of female-headed households, one is tempted to observe that what may be measured in the many instances where this pattern correlates with poor achievement of the children, is the poverty of these families. About eighty-six percent of children in nonwhite female-headed homes lived in poverty in 1963.[19] Although one hesitates to make such a glib comparison, one does observe what seem like many de facto female headed households in wealthy suburbs. One difference between the upper and lower class phenomenon may be the amount of money the father is contributing to the family.

In a recent paper, S. Alan Cohen commented on the relationship of family stability to the basic educational skill of reasing:

> There is no evidence linking lack of intact family to inability to learn to read in a causal relationship. Not only is such evidence lacking, but logically it is as absurd to assume that a fatherless child will not learn to read as it is to assume that he will not learn to climb stairs or ride a bike, or fly a kite...in the same way it is absurd to assume a general causal relationship between neurosis or bad mental health by any reasonable definition and inability to learn to read.[20]

Joan Gordon's research in Central Harlem concerned itself with the ability of a small sample of lower-income Negro mothers to cope with various aspects of social living. In the area of the mother's educational

functioning, she was concerned with behavior (e.g., child discusses content of school with mother, mother goes to school without being asked to come) and knowledge (e.g., mother believes that high schools differ in courses offered or in their quality and standards or that education is valuable for both general and concrete ends). She found, first of all, that one-third of the sample was functioning especially well in regard to education; one-third, marginally, and one-third, very poorly. Furthermore, she examined educational functioning in relation to social pathology (e.g., narcotics addiction, pattern of out-of-wedlock children, psychiatric disorders). She found that mothers in families with the greatest pathology, spread inter- and intra-generationally, were more effective in coping with the formal structures that impinged upon them than those in less disturbed families. Of those functioning high in education, over eighty per cent were high in social pathology, while of those functioning marginally or poorly, sixty per cent were low in pathology.[21]

It is finally important to note that Gordon found that individuals display different degrees of adequacy in the several areas of functioning she measured.[22] Thus, it would seem that coping ability is by no means a generalized skill and that the resources of various members of the disadvantaged community needed to be anticipated with considerably more subtlety than most of our programs have attempted.

THE CASE FOR NATIONAL ACTION

The assertion of the Report that "...unless the damage to the Negro family is repaired, all the efforts to end discrimination and poverty and injustice will come to little," suggests that the family must be stabilized before there can be progress in other areas. The implication seems to be that educational attainments will not respond to improvements in educational institutions, at least not in the absence of family rehabilitation. Yet it seems that we simply have not made sufficient

efforts to end discrimination and poverty and injustice to be able to conclude that the Negro community will not benefit from such changes.

The economist, Fashi Fein, for example, estimates that:

> one-third to one-half of the poverty of the Negro <u>today</u> is a function of discrimination today, that is, not the historical discrimination in education, but the fact that Negroes <u>with</u> education are placed in occupations lower than whites with the same education and receive wages lower than whites in those occupations with the same education.[23]

There has been much speculation as to what means would be used to rehabilitate the Negro family. Subsequently Moynihan has maintained that he intended, among other measures, a family allowance program--which for all the world seems like an effort to reduce poverty. A program of income maintenance categorically for children would be very desirable. Yet Moynihan subsequently proposed about eight dollars a month per child under six and twelve dollars per child from six to seventeen.[24] Now, that amount would hardly seem to raise many Negro children out of poverty, much less affect the severe deterioration to which the Report alludes. What Alvin Schorr deems a modest proposal would be a benefit of fifty dollars a month for each child under six years of age. Such a program would, he estimates, lift three out of every four children currently living in poverty out of that status.[25]

Having indicated that the proportion of the Negro community exhibiting family instability is much smaller than the Report maintains and that the relationship of such family patterns to educational functioning has yet to be established, we find it much less relevant than did the authors of the Report, with their assumptions, to predicate improvement in this particular area of achievement on family change.

The question does remain whether those families showing severe breakdown and poor educational functioning would improve their educational performance in response to programs geared toward increasing family

stability. Might not they as well as other families require and profit more from institutional changes, perhaps in conjunction with other efforts?

Joan Gordon's conclusions concerning educational functioning seem quite relevant to the issue of social policy. She notes the particular urgency of schools being good when a third to a half of the parents in a community are not prepared to counteract poor functioning by the school system or to give strong added support to good schooling. Citing two cases from her sample, one where the mother viewed the school as caretaker and the other where it was perceived as authoritarian, she notes that such attitudes presently have negative consequences, but if schools were of high quality they could have positive effects.[26]

Among those families exhibiting severe breakdown, we need to continue to investigate the relevance of such behavior to school functioning and to experiment with and evaluate various mixes of institutional responses and family-change strategies.

Of far greater importance, however, is to more clearly specify the barriers to educational achievement among the majority of poor families and to attempt to design institutional and individual change strategies to deal with what research suggests are a wide variety of levels of functioning.

One suspects that a beneficial side effect of programs that would improve slum schools would be family change--we often speak of compensatory efforts before we have made commensurate efforts, that is, made them comparable to schools in better neighborhoods. But family change, as in the case of the 201 plan for quality segregated education, would not as such be the goal of these strategies.[27]

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CULTURAL DEPRIVATION: SOME SECOND THOUGHTS

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At the time I was invited to this conference, I told the sponsors that I was in the process of re-examining some of the HARYOU data with an eye towards unraveling some of the problems with which this particular conference is concerned. And in short order, I found myself on the program.

Not yet having learned the virtues of a closed mouth, what I am going to do is to proceed and to share with you some of the preliminary -- perhaps premature -- thinking that is involved in this re-examination. I trust that you will treat what I am about to say with the kind of tolerance that it deserves at this stage.

Let me start by describing the nature of the data that are being examined. The data consist of standardized interviews with 780 adults and 311 adolescents in the central Harlem community. The adults were interviewed between June and December of 1964, and the adolescents were interviewed between January and March of 1965. The adolescents were residents of the same households as the adults. Hence, much of the data pertain to families within the central Harlem community.

The goal of the adult survey was to interview 1,000 randomly selected central Harlem residents, twenty-one years of age or older. The interviews were conducted in every fourth block in central Harlem; and from within each of the blocks that was selected, four percent, or a total of 1,128 housing units, were drawn as a sample; and then one adult in each of these units was to be interviewed.

The selection of a specific person to be interviewed was done in two steps: first, a random selection of four percent of the apartments within each block, and then a random selection of a person within that apartment to be interviewed. Enumerators listed each apartment in a block by starting at the northwest corner of the block and proceeding around it in a clockwise direction. When the listings were returned

to the office, apartments were selected by reference to a table of random numbers. The addresses and the apartment numbers that were so selected were then typed on what are called enumeration folders and given to the interviewers. The interviewers thus went out to a pre-designated address and apartment. After contacting someone in the apartment, the interviewer found out who lived there, and then proceeded to rank all persons over twenty according to age, from oldest to youngest. The enumeration folder contained a chart which randomly selected one of these persons over twenty-one to be interviewed, and the interviewer was to interview that person and no one else in the apartment.

Approximately forty trained interviewers were used to collect the data. While some of the questions were of the check-list type, others were open-ended. All answers, actually all remarks of the respondents, were recorded virtually verbatim and then returned to the office of processing and analysis.

The adolescent survey made use of the same households as the adult survey. Of the 1,128 households in the adult survey, 226 were identified as containing 417 persons between the ages of ten and nineteen. Efforts were made to interview all of these adolescents, and interviews were actually held with 311.

Insofar as possible, interviewers of adolescents were assigned to the homes in which they had previously conducted interviews. In most instances, the interviewers were remembered by members of the household and permission to interview was obtained on the basis of past rapport, and understanding of what was involved in an interview.

The interviews with adults and adolescents ranged broadly over a number of topics. Respondents were queried about their attitudes towards central Harlem, their participation or desire to engage in social action programs, their hopes for the future,

and their perceptions of the present. They were asked to describe family relationships, to appraise the state of local education, and were queried about their involvement in formal and informal groups within the community. Such extensive data can be used to illuminate a number of substantive and theoretical problems, not the least of which is the role of family and community influences on school achievements.

Data on school achievement were compiled from the cumulative school records of all adolescents who had been part of the adolescent sample. Data were collected for two years, the year immediately preceding the 1965 interviews and the year immediately following them. These data are still being processed, and I shall have very little to say about the educational data specifically.

Let me indicate that eventually we shall correlate school performance with attitudes, values, and behaviors of adolescents and adults with the objective of trying to specify which attitudes, values, and behaviors, if any, are related to school performance, and under what kind of conditions.

Our more immediate concern has been with the constellation of attitudes and perceptions of the central Harlem community as a whole. Though I do not have direct educational data to report yet, our early impressions are, I think, of relevance and importance to the whole matter of the education of disadvantaged peoples.

Spurred by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, American education is now embarked upon a great effort to improve the teaching of disadvantaged pupils. Most of this effort, from the preschool programs of Headstart to the special tutoring programs in college, is of the compensatory type. That is, programs are intended to compensate for a complex of social, economic and educational handcaps suffered by disadvantaged children.

It is now admitted, to quote the Panel of Education Research and Development, that:

> In neighborhood after neighborhood across the country, more than half of each age group fails to complete high school, and five percent or fewer go on to some form of higher education.
>
> In many schools the average measured IQ is under 85, and it drops steadily as the children grow older. Adolescents depart from these schools ill-prepared to lead a satisfying, useful life or to participate successfully in the community.

Underlying the philosophy of compensatory programs is the idea that for a variety of reasons the disadvantaged--predominantly Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and rural whites -- possess attitudes and values that are different from those of middle-class America; and as a consequence they are unprepared to take advantage of the things which school has to offer.

The report of the California Advisory Committee on Compensatory Education, for example, suggests that:

> They tend to lack...social experiences which our present school curriculums assume to be common to all students. This means that their experiences in the society are marked by sharp differences from the normal or regular pattern assumed by the middle-class oriented school.

The report goes on to say that: "They often have been subjected to values and expectations which tend to generate conflict between themselves and the school." It is universally conceded that the family carries the major responsibility for socializing the child. When aberrant behavior occurs, therefore, it is not surprising that many seek at least a partial explanation in parent-child relationships.

Thus, many of the social problems of society are attributed to defective parents or weak family structures. Indeed, such was the intent of that very famous report, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action. According to this report:

> At the center of the tangle of pathology is the weakness of the (Negro) family structure. Once or twice removed, it will be found to be the principal source of most of the aberrant, inadequate or antisocial behavior that did not establish, but now serves to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation.

Embedded in the tangle of pathology described by Moynihan are poor school performance and low IQ's. Despite the title of this report, it does not succeed in making a case for national attention

to the family. It fails because it fails to present conclusive evidence that the Negro family, weak or strong, has anything to do with the tangle of pathology.

The central methodological flaw in the report is a failure to show that the correlations between broken homes and various indices of pathology are not spurious. As Hylan Lewis points out:

> Correlation between undesired behavior or attributes and the one-parent home has been a repetitive research finding. The broken home has been reported as associated with emotional maladjustment, poor school achievement, juvenile delinquency and illegitimacy. However, when data are controlled for socio-economic status, such correlations often fade out.

A second grievous error in the report is an occasional tendency to ignore part of the data. This is most evident when Moynihan relates broken homes to the intelligence of Negro pupils. Drawing data from a study by Deutsch and Brown, the report shows that within social classes, the IQ's of first and fifth graders from broken homes is consistently lower than that of their counterparts from intact homes. The table which presents this information also reveals two other startling things: the IQ's of fifth graders are lower than that of first graders, for all Negro children; and the drop in IQ is greater for children from intact homes!

I have alluded to the shortcomings of the Moynihan report, not as a way of jumping on the anti-Moynihan bandwagon, but to illustrate the nature of the evidence that is customarily employed to trace out the effects of family structure -- or to account for educational performance.

Both the study of the family and the study of educational processes are rife with explanations, and devoid of substantial data which support the explanations. The attempt to account for academic failure in terms of family malfunctions runs the grave danger of multiplying speculations, myths, and misperceptions.

Having said this, what would be more natural, then, to have part of our analysis of the central Harlem data enter this tangled thicket? The view that we are developing sees the family as an institution which is greatly shaped by its social environment, and which in turn helps shape a child's image of himself and the world around him. We do not, however, view the family as the major molder of values and attitudes, but consider the impact of the family to be constrained or enhanced by its social context.

Let me spell out in a little more detail the kind of conceptual framework--this is a fancy word for ideas and guesses--which we have developed. A universal function of the family is the social placement of the child. By assigning to the child the same social position as his family, other members of the society are able to define him, and consequently know how to act towards him. For nearly all of the children of central Harlem, this initial definition is that of a Negro slum child.

In terms of its consequences for adults, this caste location means minimal economic opportunities. This denial bears most heavily upon the male head of the family who finds it difficult to carry out his role as provider for the family. Negro females, on the other hand, have relatively less difficulty in finding and maintaining employment; hence, in many instances, the female provides the main economic support for the family. This reversal of roles is bound to produce confusion for the children, for in these circumstances there is difficulty in teaching the proper adult responsibilities. Such a situation is also likely to reduce the wife's respect for and dependence upon her husband, the reverberations of which affect the children's estimation of their father.

As Komarovsky has shown, when the male is unable to provide for his family, he suffers a loss in prestige and authority. The male escapes from this situation all too often, by abandoning the

family.

When the husband leaves, the mother is left with the choice of which role she will carry out, that of provider for the family or that of the emotional center in the family. Sometimes she decides to fill both. In such an instance, the drain on her attention and energy is heavy. One consequence of this is likely to be sporadic attention to her children, resulting in lessened knowledge of their behavior and inconsistent rewards and punishments. If the mother takes on the role of provider and turns over the expressive roles to someone else, for example, the grandmother, the affectional relationship between mother and child is likely to be weakened. On the other hand, should she retain the expressive role and leave the provider role to others, probably the Department of Welfare, the absence of a male identification figure greatly diminishes the ability of the children to learn the duties and responsibilities of adult behavior in the occupational world. In short, given the situation of no male in the household, whatever choice the mother makes, the consequences for the children -- especially the male children -- are likely to be negative.

One solution that has been adopted by some families is to turn over the role of provider to the oldest boy. This, unfortunately, is often done at the expense of the training necessary to acquire a viable occupational position. The short-term solution of the family's economic need thus turns out to defeat the long-term improvement of the family's economic position.

Even when the family is able to hold itself together, despite the debilitating effects of poverty, family members are likely, for reasons of health, to be unable to consistently carry out their family responsibilities. Some of you may remember that the data compiled on health in central Harlem tends to indicate very poor health conditions. I think these also impinge very directly upon the family and the relationships that go on within it, because poor

health impairs not only the normal functioning of the person who is ill, but also that of the mate whose activities must compensate for the temporary inactivity of the other. Even when illness strikes one of the children, the attention required from parents must result in inattention to the needs and behavior of the others. Poor health, of course, is a direct result of poor and overcrowded housing.

Overcrowded housing has a further consequence, for cramped quarters militate against the establishment of family rituals, such as eating together at a certain time, and these rituals communicate to the child the idea of routine. Such rituals, in addition, introduce some organization into family life and provide some stable points of reference for the child.

The presence of non-family members, for example, boarders, in the household is also likely to prove disruptive of family routines. Similarly, a pattern of coming and going, such as the 4:00 p.m. to midnight shift, cannot be harmonized with family duties and responsibilities.

Overlaying these specifics is a more general feeling on the part of the adult members of the family which is acquired from daily association with persons of like circumstances. This is the feeling that the situation cannot be changed. This air of defeatism is easily communicated to the child, resulting in a deadening of motivation and a lowering of aspiration.

Not everything about the central Harlem community can be classified as inimical to the proper socialization of children, however. Traditionally, the Negro family has maintained extensive kin relations, and these are available to bolster the family at key points. An aunt, ~~uncle,~~ grandfather, or other relative is often available to substitute for a missing parent or help with the burdens of child rearing. To this strength can be added the great amount of residential stability in central Harlem. This stability implies knowing and being known by neighbors with a resulting increase in the

surveillance of children and the ability to control them. Most important, perhaps, is the acknowledged love and faith that is placed in children. Attention is devoted to their needs and hopes; and sacrifices are gladly endured for the sake of the children.

In brief, the impact of the community is seen to be first of all, an undermining of the father as an identification figure. Secondly, there is the difficulty of establishing and maintaining family routines. Thirdly, a disruption of the parents' ability to be consistent in their rewards and punishments. Fourth, an interference with the affectional bonds among family members; and fifth, a potential reversal of roles between father and mother. If these disruptions occur, and no means of compensating for them instituted, imperfectly socialized children should result.

The undermining of the role of the father frequently produces manifestations of violence, cruelty, malicious mischief, and open defiance of authority. Such behavior is often interpreted as incomplete socialization in that the proper internal control or behavior has failed to develop.

Many of the same consequences follow from a lack of routine and rituals in the family setting. Internal controls on behavior are largely developed in response to stable expectations of the environment. When these are absent, impulsive behavior reigns unchecked.

The effects of inconsistent rewards and punishments have been amply described, especially in the psychiatric literature. They have led, in many instances, to psychotic or neurotic behavior; and an inability of the child to learn what is expected of him. Inhibitions against certain acts fail to develop, and certain other behaviors are not strengthened.

A further likely consequence is the dampening of aspirations, with a concomitant lowering of achievement motivation. The motivation to achieve can also be lowered by a deficit in affection between

parent and child. Much motivation to achieve rests upon the desire to please others, and chief among these others are parents. When affectional bonds are weak, the desire to please is correspondingly weakened, and the motivation to achieve lessened.

Finally, as has already been mentioned, the potential reversal of roles between mother and father, stemming from the greater ability of the former to get and hold a job, is likely to interfere with the learning of proper adult behavior. Without a clear understanding of what patterns of behavior are expected of adults, the child flounders in uncertainty about the kinds of things he ought to learn.

Now this scheme which I have spent some time elaborating was developed without much reference to the survey data from central Harlem. It is based mainly on the theoretical writings about family processes and their effects.

Our preliminary results from the survey make us wonder how much of this conception will withstand an empirical test. So far, the most striking thing emerging from our data is the prevalence of middle-class attitudes among all segments of the central Harlem community.

Adult responses reflected the dominant American goals and values in that they placed great emphasis on educational and occupational achievement. Parental hopes and aspirations for their children were reflected in the answers to the question: "If you had a boy, what kind of a career would you really hope he would choose?" Fully 65 percent of the respondents indicated a profession or a skilled trade. When asked a parallel question about girls, 60 percent indicated a profession or a skilled trade.

This aspiration, in turn, was closely linked to educational achievement. When asked, "About how much schooling do you think a boy around here needs to make good in the world?" 65 percent responded, at least some college education;" and 59 percent also felt

that girls needed at least some college to make good in the world. Nearly all of those who did not respond,college,stated that high school graduation was needed. Education and training were usually cited as most important in getting ahead, and their absence as a reason for not getting ahead.

Also noted as important elements in success were skills and talent, hard work, and ability to make a good impression. For most of the residents of central Harlem, success was taken to be the possession of material goods, an important job, personal satisfaction, and residence in a good neighborhood. In other words, a strictly middle-class view of what it is that one is striving towards.

Much the same broad picture emerged in the responses of the adolescents. These youngsters aspired and expected to achieve occupations which would provide them with a substantial increase in status over the levels attained by adults in their households. Sixty percent of the adolescents who were interviewed aspired to enter a professional or technical field, and forty-three percent expected to do so. When asked what might prevent them from realizing their occupational goals, many reported that nothing stood in the way, while others cited lack of education or economic burdens. And, like the adults, they asserted that education and training were most important in getting ahead; with skill and talent, hard work, getting along with people, and contacts also important.

The adolescents also showed a very strong commitment to school and to the value of education. Eighty-three percent wanted to finish high school, and seventy-eight percent expected to finish high school. Of those adolescents who wished to finish high school, fifty-eight percent aspired to some college education. School was also most frequently mentioned as a concern. About one third of the adolescents worried about getting along in school, passing subjects, and graduating; while an additional 11 percent worried about getting the right

kind of education.

These kinds of results cast serious doubt on the basic assumptions of most programs intended to elevate the academic performance of the disadvantaged. If, as the central Harlem data seem to indicate, ghetto residents--young and old alike--subscribe to the middle-class virtues of hard work, thrift, personal responsibility for success or failure, and the utility of education, how can one account for their poor scholastic performance by reference to a discrepancy between minority group values and those of the middle-class?

One possible explanation, quite different, and not to be passed over is the simple idea that ghetto children are not taught as well as middle-class children. There is an overabundance of evidence which shows that slum schools are substandard in educational facilities and teacher talent. To the extent that such things enhance pupil performance, the children of the ghetto will not match the academic accomplishments of their middle-class friends.

There are other possible explanations, of course. One which intrigues me, because it is supported by some of the central Harlem data, has been advanced by Coleman. He notes that Negro parents show a greater interest in their child's education and greater aspirations for his success in education than do white parents of the same economic level. Yet, this difference is not as strongly related to academic achievement as it is for white and Oriental pupils. Among the possible explanations for this result advanced by Coleman is the thought that Negro parents are less able to translate their interest into practices that support the child's achievement.

Although 85 percent of the adults in central Harlem belonged to a church, most were inactive in church affairs. Furthermore, less than half of the adults were members of formal groups, and very few belonged to more than one group. The largest percentage of adults, 13 percent, belong to religious organizations; and only

one percent belong to tenants' councils and block associations. Even the few who belonged to organizations could not be considered very active, in that they seldom attended meetings and were neither officers nor committee members.

Formal organizations are a prime medium for developing the skills necessary to see one's wishes come to fruition. It may be that miniscule participation in formal organizations has cramped the Negro parent's ability to insure the academic success of his child.

In these few remarks I have tried to give some indication of the kind of analysis which the central Harlem data are undergoing, and have attempted to connect this to academic performance.

The research possibilities in the general area of school, family and community relationships are almost endless. If I have tried to stress any single thing, it is the necessity for careful and precise documentation of the structural interactions among school, family, and community; otherwise we are left again with speculations, myths, misperceptions.